GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2245
ANSWERED ON:06.08.2001
SMUGGLING OF BIRDS
NARESH KUMAR PUGLIA

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India is one of the first members of the Convention of International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora pledging support to check smuggling of wild life products;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether more than 1200 red Munia birds and 38 Alexandrine parakeets, being illegally exported have been seized at Indira Gandhi International Airport, New Delhi on May 13, 2001;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) the action taken against the persons involved in this illegal smuggling of birds; and

(f) the strict measures the Government propose to take to check such illegal activities?

Answer

MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R.BAALU)

(a)&(b) India was the 25th country to become the member of the Convention of International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora(CITES) on 20.7.1976.Since its becoming a member of the convention the provisions relating to the convention is meticulously being implemented. Alexandrine parakeets are included in Appendix II of the Convention. However, munia is not amongst the species listed in the Appendices of CITES.

(c),(d)&(e) On 13.5.2001 the Customs authorities seized 1,200 red Munias and 33 Alexandrine parakeets at the Indira Gandhi International Airport which were being smuggled to Sharjah via, Lucknow. One accused has been arrested. A case has been filed in the Court of law.

(f) The Steps taken by the Government of India to check the illegal activities are as follows:

(1) Steps taken at the State level:

(i) Legal protection has been provided to wild animals against hunting and commercial exploitation under the provisions of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.

(ii) State level and District level coordination committees have been set up in several States to prevent poaching and illegal trade in wildlife.

(iii) State Wildlife authorities carry out regular checking of the stocks of dealers in birds.

(2) Steps taken at National level

i. Government of India has set up Regional and Sub-regional Offices for wildlife preservation in major export and trade centres of the country to prevent smuggling of wild animals and their products.

ii. Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has been empowered under the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 to apprehend and prosecute wildlife offenders. Anti- poaching efforts are being coordinated with INTERPOL.

iii. Financial and technical help is being extended to the States under various Centrally Sponsored Schemes, viz. Project Tiger, Project Elephant, Development of National Parks and Sanctuaries, and Eco-development around Protected Areas for enhancing the capacity and infrastructure of the States for providing effective protection to wild animals. Financial assistance is, in particular, being provided for raising `Strike Forces` and providing arms to the protection staff for combating the organised poachers. Assistance is also provided for giving rewards to the informers for eliciting information about poachers and smugglers.

iv. A Special Coordination and Enforcement Committee has been set up under the chairmanship of Secretary, Environment & Forests, Government of India, for control of poaching and illegal trade in wildlife.

v. Export of wild animals and their derivatives is prohibited under EXIM policy.

vi. A National Conference of Forests and Environment Ministers of State Government was held on 29th and 30th January, 2001. It was resolved to organise existing protection staff into viable formations for effective control of poaching and to create enforcement infrastructure both within and out side protected areas.

vii. Ministry of Home Affairs has written to all the State Governments to lend a helping hand to the field formations to curb poaching and illegal trade in wildlife.

(3) Steps taken at International level.

i. Government of India seeks international co-operation under the provisions of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna (CITES) for control of illegal trade in wildlife items.

ii. To control transboundary trade a Protocol has been signed with Peoples` Republic of China and a MOU has been signed with His Majesty`s Government of Nepal.

iii. A Global Tiger Forum of Tiger Range Countries has been created for addressing international issues related to Tiger Conservation.